

Week Ending Friday, June 22, 2007

The President's Radio Address

June 16, 2007

Good morning. This week, Congress began to debate its annual spending bills. The American people expect us to spend their tax dollars wisely, or not at all and to pursue pro-growth economic policies that will allow us to reduce the deficit while keeping our economy strong.

Since my administration's tax relief was implemented 4 years ago, our economy has added more than 8 million new jobs, and we've experienced 45 months of uninterrupted job growth. With more Americans working and more businesses thriving, our economy has produced record tax revenues. The Treasury Department recently reported that this year's Federal revenues are up 8 percent over last year. As a result, our Nation's budget deficit is about one-third lower than it was at this time last year.

In addition to pursuing pro-growth tax relief, my administration is working to reduce the Federal deficit through strict fiscal discipline. Over the past 3 years, we have met the urgent needs of our Nation while holding the growth of annual domestic spending close to 1 percent—well below the rate of inflation. I've also proposed policies that would slow the unsustainable growth of our most serious long-term fiscal challenge: entitlement spending. By keeping taxes low and restraining Federal spending, we can meet my plan to have a balanced budget by 2012.

The Democrats in Congress are trying to take us in a different direction. They've passed a budget that would mean higher taxes for American families and job creators, ignore the need for entitlement reform, and pile on hundreds of billions of dollars in new Government spending over the next 5 years. This tax-and-spend approach puts our economic growth and deficit reduction at risk.

For months, I've warned the Democrats in Congress that I will not accept an irrespon-

sible tax-and-spend budget. I put Democratic leaders on notice that I will veto bills with excessive levels of spending. And I am not alone in my opposition. In the House, 147 Republicans have pledged to support fiscal discipline by opposing excessive spending. These 147 Members are more than one-third needed to sustain my veto of any bills that spend too much.

Another key area of difference between my administration and the Democratic leadership in Congress is my support for meaningful earmark reform. Earmarks are spending provisions that are slipped into bills by individual Members of Congress, often at the last hour and without discussion or debate. It's not surprising that this leads to unnecessary Federal spending. And the problem is growing. Over the last decade, the number of earmarks has more than tripled.

In January, I proposed reforms that would make the earmark process more transparent, end the practice of concealing earmarks in so-called report language that is never included in legislation, and cut the number and cost of earmarks by at least half. My administration has also developed the Government's first public database of earmarks, and we've posted them on a web site: earmarks.omb.gov. On this web site, we will also be releasing information on new earmarks, because this administration wants you to see where your tax dollars are being spent.

After I announced my earmark reforms in January, the House passed a rule that called for full disclosure of earmarks. But in the past few weeks, Democratic House leaders announced that they were abandoning this commitment. Instead of full disclosure, they decided they would not make public any earmarks until after Members had already voted on the spending bills. This change would have allowed a small group of lawmakers and their unelected staff to meet behind closed doors to decide how and where to spend your tax dollars. I'm pleased to report that earlier

this week, a group of House Republicans stopped this plan and extracted a commitment from House Democrats to list all earmarks in advance and give lawmakers a chance to strike them. The American people need to hold House Democrats accountable for keeping that commitment.

In the weeks ahead, my administration will continue pushing for earmark reform and holding the line on Federal spending. The American people do not want to return to the days of tax-and-spend policies. They expect accountability and fiscal discipline in Washington, DC. And I will use my veto to stop tax increases and runaway spending that threaten the strength of our economy and the prosperity of our people.

Thank you for listening.

NOTE: The address was recorded at 7:15 a.m. on June 15 in the Cabinet Room at the White House for broadcast at 10:06 a.m. on June 16. The transcript was made available by the Office of the Press Secretary on June 15 but was embargoed for release until the broadcast. The Office of the Press Secretary also released a Spanish language transcript of this address.

Remarks Honoring NCAA Championship Teams

June 18, 2007

The President. Thank you all. Please be seated. Welcome to the South Lawn. This is an historic day. After all, this is the largest gathering that we've had for Champions Day, and we're glad to welcome the champs here to the South Lawn. I appreciate being with good athletes, good students, and good leaders; and that's what it takes to become a champion.

I appreciate the fact that you've endured tough practices, that you've set big goals, and you worked hard to achieve them. And so we congratulate your coaches; we congratulate your families; but most importantly, we congratulate you. We honor America's champs.

The Secretary of the Treasury is with us, Secretary Paulson. Thank you for coming, sir. I appreciate the Members of the United States Congress that have joined us—and the

United States Senate. Now, you don't need to do the gator thing. *[Laughter]*

The teams here today span 21 different campuses in 14 different States from California all the way over to Florida. You represent eight different athletic conferences: the Big Ten to the Pac-10 to the West Coast Conference and to the Ivy League. There's Tigers and Badgers, Huskers and Anteaters. *[Laughter]* Go Anteaters. *[Laughter]* Fight Anteaters.

You've distinguished yourselves on fields and fairways, tracks and tennis courts, rivers and rinks, pommel horses and pools, bowling alleys, mountains, and basketball arenas. You have one thing in common: You have achieved the great title, "champion," and nobody can take that away from you.

We have a number of first-time champs here today. The Auburn women's outdoor track and field team is here. I think that would go "War Eagle."

Audience members. War Eagle!

The President. There you go. Don't get carried away here; it's a little—*[laughter]*—it's a little hot. *[Laughter]*

Speaking about the Anteaters, UC Irvine men's volleyball team is with us. Congratulations. The Gauchos, UC Santa Barbara men's soccer team; Georgia Tech women's tennis team is the first-time champ; Pepperdine men's tennis team is with us. Vanderbilt women's bowling team is with us today. There you go—Wisconsin men's indoor track and field.

Some of the teams here have been waiting a long time to reclaim a championship. Dartmouth men's and women's skiing team—they won their first title 30 years ago, and now they're here at the White House. Congratulations.

Michigan State men's ice hockey team—they won their first hockey crown more than 20 years ago, and they're back. Congratulations to you.

We've got some repeat champs here. It's hard enough to win; it's really hard to repeat. Auburn women's swimming team, back-to-back—ready? War Eagle—

Audience members. War Eagle!

The President. Cal women's crew.

A feat that's really hard to do is win back-to-back NCAA basketball titles. And we're